

Greetings and Brightest Blessings! For those of you who don't remember me, I am M. Rev. Davron Michaels, Arch Priest and CEO of the New Aeon Church International, the original Correllian Nativist Church. I am also one of the founders and former Presidents of Witch School and have served in many roles and capacities with both organizations over the years.

I have been asked to provide some background on the early days of the Tradition and Witch School, including the events that led to Ed and Don's eventual resignations from the original Church and Tradition.

But first, I am so terribly sorry for everything that you are all going through. I understand the stress and disharmony that such disruption and uncertainty can bring to any community, as well as to each of us personally.

I am deeply saddened to see all that has recently happened here and am greatly disappointed to see that it is happening for precisely the same reasons, and due to the same two individuals that caused so many problems for the original Tradition, back in 2006.

The Correllian Tradition started as a very small family tradition in Danville, Illinois in the mid 1990's. In 2004, Don Lewis, Ed Hubbard and myself legally incorporated the Tradition as the Correllian Nativist Church International and were granted Federal 501(c)(3) status as a Church and public charity. Being granted a 501(c)(3) offers a great many benefits to the Church, but also a great deal of responsibilities and regulatory obligations that must be strictly adhered to.

When I first joined the Tradition, there were only a small handful of members and only the original First Degree materials had been written. Back then, lessons included essay format exams, which were individually submitted via email, or even hardcopy physical postal correspondence. Initially, only myself and a small group of very talented and dedicated individuals were available to work with students.

In 2001, I and a few other dedicated volunteers from the Tradition worked with Ed Hubbard to design and operate Witch School. As an instructional design specialist and professor at one of the oldest and most innovative adult distance learning universities in the world, I was highly instrumental in helping with the initial instructional design, including the mentor system and student support programs and spent many thousands of hours supporting them personally.

Once Witch School launched, membership in the Tradition exploded quickly. Our clergy mentor program was rapidly expanded to accommodate the influx, and a new system for the Tradition was deigned outside of Witch School to track memberships, initiations, lineage, donations, and more.

The problem with this arrangement, is that Witch School was originally a sole-proprietorship business, established exclusively for the personal profit and benefit of Ed Hubbard, while all of the mentors, staff, content developers, were volunteers working for free on behalf of the Tradition.

Numerous discussions about this disparity with Ed Hubbard over the years failed to move him, and during my entire tenure at Witch School from its founding through our separation, the Tradition never received so much as a single cent from Witch School. Ever.

In one of my lives, I am also a human resource professional and consultant, and given the lack of any benefit to the Tradition or compensation to the mentors, staff, and authors who ran Witch School, this is conceivably one of the largest violations of Federal and State Employment and Labor laws that I have ever seen. Since Witch School was a private business, those working there should have been classified as employees and compensated at least at the minimum wage rate, or as contractors, receiving contractual compensation and 1099 forms to file with their income taxes; and are required to have at least statutory benefit coverage for unemployment, Workers' Compensation, etc.

Meanwhile, in 2004, I purchased a church in Albany, New York, merging my own Temple of Astral Light with an existing Spiritualist group, known as Trinity Temple and several other pagan organizations. Our primary objective was to provide a physical home for the Correllian Tradition that would allow it to grow and thrive. Trinity Temple became the first congregational pagan church of the modern era, drawing tremendous attention from the wider community and the media.

When the Tradition was incorporated as the Church in 2004, the Temple of Astral Light/ Trinity Temple was designated as the Church's corporate offices and the Tradition's new Mother Temple and all record keeping and financial management functions were transferred there.

It was here at Trinity Temple where many of the Tradition's finest moments occurred or were planned. There were two excellent national leadership conferences, several of the largest Lustrations ever held, many distinguished guests and speakers, interfaith ceremonies, charitable campaigns, community outreach events, and a wide array of classes and activities provided live and at a distance to suit any metaphysical interest. Space was also made available to all other pagan or metaphysical groups within the area, creating a vibrant and active community center.

It was also here where the Pagan Pentacle Campaign was coordinated between our Tradition, Aquarian Tabernacle Church, and Circle Sanctuary. After the death of the spouse of a joint member of our Tradition and Circle Sanctuary, Pete Pathfinder-Davis and I partnered with Americans United for Separation of Church and State while Selena Fox worked with the American Civil Liberties Union in a double suit. Our lawsuit was filed on Nov. 13, 2006, and in the legal action, Americans United argued that the federal government was showing favoritism toward certain religions by maintaining a list of 38 religious symbols that could be used on headstones and memorial markers. On April 23, 2007, a settlement was reached with Americans United on our behalf. As part of the settlement, the Veterans Administration added the pentacle to the list of emblems allowed in national cemeteries and on VA-issued headstones, markers, and plaques. I am pleased to report that today, Sgt. Patrick D. Stewart is buried in the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, with a pentacle proudly displayed on his grave. This was one of the greatest achievements in modern pagan history, and certainly one of the Tradition's finest moments.

Now, as you may imagine, running a physical church is not a cheap affair. My Temple ran many classes, events, and fundraising activities to help cover operating expenses, but, more often than not, I had to fill in for any shortfall with personal donations.

During this period, while I lived in proximity to the Mother Temple in New York and managed the Church's finances as CFO, Don and Ed continued to reside in Hoopeston, where Witch School was housed. In addition to the lack of support from Witch School for the Tradition or its congregation who actually ran Witch School, it quickly became evident that any funds received in Hoopeston on behalf of the Church were not being reported or forwarded to Albany for deposit to the Church's bank and investment accounts.

At this point, I and the local congregation were funding all Tradition operations, events, insurance, legal fees, technology fees, often Don and Ed's travel and lodging expenses, etc., while Ed and Don took all of the money from Witch School and most of the funds received by the Tradition for their personal use and profit.

As a 501(c)(3) Church and public charity, this is absolutely prohibited and strictly illegal. As a church, all funds or donations received belong not to the Officers, but to the congregation of the Church, and must be used for their ultimate benefit, with approval and oversight by the Board of Directors. After numerous and exhaustive discussions and negotiations, neither Ed nor Don would agree to modify their behavior and continued to embezzle funds from the Church.

As a result, in 2005, we reached an agreement where Ed would retire from the Tradition, and I would resign as President of Witch School to afford separation between the for-profit Witch School and the not-for-profit Church. Don and I then agreed to continue our affiliation with Witch School until a new college and seminary could be established run by and for the Church.

Alas, the financial improprieties continued unabated, and Don became increasingly aggressive and combative when approached on these subjects. As a result, on August 28, 2006, the Board issued a final warning to Don Lewis threatening legal action and prosecution. An agreement was reached where he would remain as First Priest and Chancellor but would resign as Chief Executive Officer of the Board. He was required to immediately begin compliance with all Board directives, as well as with State and Federal law, and to remit all future funds taken in on behalf of the Church to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. Don agreed to this, and, while recorded in official Church Board records, it was agreed that we would not publicly address this matter to avoid disruption to the congregation and embarrassment to Mr. Lewis.

At the conclusion of this Board meeting at the Mother Temple in Albany, we had hoped that we could put this matter behind us once and for all and move forth with our mission to provide valuable services to our congregation and to the greater pagan community. Unfortunately, this turned out not to be the case.

Shortly after arriving back in Hoopeston, and upon consultation with Ed Hubbard, Don Lewis submitted a formal letter of resignation to the Church. On December 3, 2006, the Board met to formally accept Mr. Lewis' resignation from the Church's Board of Directors, the Correllian Nativist Church International NFP; as Chancellor, First Priest, Regent, and Head of the Correllian Nativist Tradition; from all Orders, Temples, Shrines, and affiliate organizations; and as a member of the Church and Tradition. Mr. Lewis had renounced his clerical Ordination, along with all titles, certifications, and affiliations from the Church, the Tradition, and its affiliated organizations.

Rather than comply with the Church's Board directives and Federal and State law, Don Lewis ultimately chose to resign from the Tradition and Church that he himself had founded in order to continue to perpetuate his and Ed's long running financial scam. How sad, disturbing, and telling is that?

Immediately after resigning from the Church and Tradition, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hubbard immediately began a smear campaign against me. Don announced that he had "Warlocked" me from the Tradition, and Ed started a campaign stating that I was a Satanist.

These are pages directly out of Mr. Hubbard's notorious and horrifying "[Witch Wars Defense Manual](#)", which, thankfully, now appears to be out of print. I do have a copy, but won't share it here for copyright and ethical purposes.

While I mentioned earlier that I am, among other things, a human resource specialist, you really don't need to be one to understand that once you resign from an organization, you no longer have the authority to fire those who still work there, or in this case, to "Warlock" them. As delighted as I was to be able to tell my colleague Christian Day, the great "Warlock of Salem", that I too was now an "Official Warlock", lol, such a proclamation is nearly as ridiculous as it is invalid.

As far as the Satanist claim, I am not, nor have I ever been a Satanist. And Ed and Don know this perfectly well. Not, by the way, that I have anything against Satanists. I know many fine Satanists, who were, ironically, among the most supportive during this slanderous Hubbardian effort. A few months before this attack, I had actually been embroiled in a fairly prominent and public dispute with a number of Satanic organizations who wished to participate in a regional Pagan Pride event that I was leading. I ultimately denied their participation in the event. I did not do so because they were "evil" Satanists, but because Satanists are not an earth-based pagan religion, and generally consider themselves to be atheists. I should point out that throughout this dispute, all the Satanic groups I dealt with conducted themselves with far more collegiality and professionalism than most pagan groups that I have dealt with, and we resolved the matter with mutual respect and admiration, as should always be our goal for our interactions with members of ANY other faith.

After their resignations from the Tradition and their subsequent unethical attacks, Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Lewis continued to proclaim themselves "the Correllian Tradition" and went back to their standard scheme of calling for donations and using an entirely volunteer workforce to operate Witch School for their sole benefit and personal profit, while they went galivanting around the country and world seeking self-aggrandizement and new marks for their scams.

In 2012, after the original Church formally changed its name to the New Aeon Church, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hubbard incorporated a new church, known as the "Correllian Nativist Church". Naturally, having long since lost my patronage, and lacking the necessary skills and funds themselves, they found a new hard-working, dedicated, couple willing to do the work and bear the expenses to incorporate this new church as a 501(c)(3) organization for them. Poor M. Rev. Stephanie Neal and Rt. Rev. Mike Neal had now become the new me.

Alas, it seems that, ultimately, things involving Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hubbard did not go any better with the new church than it had with the original Tradition. Almost all of the funds collected by this new church over a ten-year period have vanished and are unaccounted for, most likely directly into the pockets of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hubbard.

Just imagine *all* of the good that could have been accomplished had those funds actually been used for their intended purpose!

Until now, I had been cautiously optimistic that perhaps they had amended their wicked ways and had learned something from their failures with the original Tradition, but, alas, it seems not. While I am not surprised, I am absolutely horrified that it has taken ten years since the incorporation of this new church (not to mention the six years prior to that) to catch or call them on these alleged financial crimes.

While, of course, none of this is really our problem, since the original Church remains fully intact and unconnected to all of this current drama, those of you who are members of this new church should profusely thank Revs Stephanie and Mike Neal for their tremendous efforts in expanding the Board and pulling together the coalition that has finally called Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Lewis on their most recent set of potential crimes.

Keeping to their standard Witch Wars playbook, immediately after being called on these issues, Don and Ed immediately launched an attack on M. Rev Neal, just as they did with me in 2006. Fortunately, Stephanie is a strong woman and does not seem to be one who is easily intimidated.

To ensure their perpetual control over the 2012 church, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hubbard have apparently now persuaded the new Board to amend their Bylaws to include provisions that, regardless of their retirements, only Don or Krystal (who has barely even been involved in the Tradition since I have been involved) may serve as CEO of the Board, and shall remain the ultimate authority on all matters for their lifetimes.

A not-for-profit church, and particularly not a Federally sanctioned 501(c)(3) one, cannot exist for the benefit of a single individual or family, making such provisions unenforceable, illegal, and legally null and void.

Just as they did after resigning from the original Tradition, Don and Ed have quickly “retired” from this new church, but have now started yet *another* new church, this time called the “Correllian church”.

While I cannot offer much hope for the mismanaged church founded in 2012 or the new 2023 church, I can offer you hope for the future, and some viable alternatives.

The modern Correllian Tradition may have been founded by Don, Ed, and I, but contrary to what they would have you believe, the Correllian Tradition has never been about us, or about Don’s family mythos, but about the many thousands of members and volunteers from around the world who have come together to form a global community, and to actually run the Tradition and conduct our many good works.

Regardless of unethical and illegal actions of some of its founders, the Tradition has always been, and will always be about its people, our global congregation. From the actions and efforts of the thousands of volunteers over the years, many new groups and initiatives have been spawned, and many thousands of people have gained valuable knowledge and skills that have allowed them to improve their lives and to go forth and change the world.

Although it appears that the 2012 church is rapidly headed for an impending collapse, fortunately, there are now many excellent alternatives for you to consider as you move forward on your path and personal life journey.

First, after these unpleasant recent events, Rev. Stephanie Neal and many survivors of the “Second Correllian Apocalypse”, have gone on to form a new organization known as the [Spirit & Nature Alliance, or SANA](#). This community was founded to provide a safe and inclusive environment where members can work to develop their own tradition or select highly ethical and loving traditions to learn about Spirit, Nature, and Wicca. This is a highly inclusive and eclectic new organization greatly worthy of your consideration.

Second, though certainly not mutually exclusive, I would be remiss if I did not remind you that the original Correllian Nativist Church and Tradition, now known as the [New Aeon Church International](#) and the New Aeon Wiccan Tradition, remain fully intact, and would happily welcome any new or returning members.

While we are the original Correllian Tradition, due to the circumstances previously described, we only have access to your Correllian Tradition membership and initiation records from 2006 or earlier, unless you have continued to work with us since the first “Correllian Apocalypse”.

While we do not usually honor initiations or certifications from other Traditions, other than on an Honorary basis or after an Advance Standing credit review process, **for a limited time, the New Aeon Church has decided to directly honor the degree completion and/or Initiatory status of members of the 2012 Correllian Nativist Church incorporated by the Neals, upon submission of copies of Certificates of Initiation and/or screen shots of Witch School transcripts records.** *Please note that Witch School records will be accepted for course completion status only, while a Certificate of Initiation will be required to establish Initiation and lineage.*

This would allow you to continue along the same path, while preserving your Initiatory lineage, degree status, and the benefits and legal protections that affiliation with a large, well-organized, church can offer. This was, after all, the entire purpose of incorporating the Tradition into a legal church in the first place.

If you are interested in joining, or re-joining, the original Church, now known as the [New Aeon Church International](#), please submit a membership application [HERE](#).

Please email any record verifications directly to my attention at [Davron.Michaels@gmail.com](mailto:Davron.Michaels@gmail.com).

One of the key tenants of all metaphysical thought is the concept of Free Will. We each have the Free Will to make our own decisions and to follow our own paths. Should you choose to remain affiliated with any church, group, or organization operated by or affiliated in any way with Mr. Ed Hubbard or Mr. Don Lewis, that is your choice, and your right. Please understand, however, that there are many compelling and well-documented reasons why you may wish to reconsider this.

Whether you are voluntarily choosing to affiliate with a cult, or with a criminal enterprise remains a subject of debate. But if you *knowingly* choose to do that, well then that is on *you*, and there may ultimately be legal consequences for doing so!

Otherwise, please be an informed consumer and spiritual practitioner and do *not* end up getting *scammed* or led into a *cult*!

After the first “Correllian Apocalypse” in 2006, I diligently attempted to warn the congregation at that time, though perhaps not as vigorously as I should have, upon retrospect. Having now learned of what they have been up to since we parted, I now *vigorously* warn you all yet *again*!



In the words of Willy Wonka, “Stop, don’t, come back”! Again, we each make our own choices in life, but if you choose to remain affiliated in any way with Ed Hubbard or Don Lewis, please do not say that I did not firmly warn you... *again!*

Finally, the Church Board of Directors has authorized me to release select documents from our founding and select excerpts from Board meetings and minutes pertaining to these matters for your further pursual:

## **Correllian Nativist Church International** **Background Information**

I greatly welcome any questions or thoughts that anyone may have. You may reach me here, or by email at [Davron.Michaels@gmail.com](mailto:Davron.Michaels@gmail.com).

I know that you are all going through a lot right now, but please know that all of your efforts have not been in vain, and that tremendous good has come of all of your Good Works. The future is bright, and you have many options available to continue to explore and grow on your personal life path.

I wish all of you the Brightest of Blessings, and great happiness in life!

Brightest Blessings,

M. Rev. Dr. Davron Michaels,  
Arch Priest and CEO, New Aeon Church International